

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
TRSE-00 IO-13 AID-05 /080 W
-----131620Z 102889 /47

O P 131427Z MAY 77 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1631

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY

AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

TEHRAN PLEASE PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY AND CONSTABLE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PK, PINT

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER CALLS FOR NATIONAL REFERENDUM

1. IN NATIONALLY TELEVISED ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
EVENING OF MAY 13, PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO CALLED FOR A
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NATIONAL REFERENDUM ON QUESTION OF WHETHER HE SHOULD REMAIN
IN POWER. PM SAID THAT OF THREE BASIC OPPOSITION DEMANDS-
A NEW ELECTION COMMISSION, NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS
AND HIS RESIGNATION-THE FIRST WAS NOT A FUNDAMENTAL
PROBLEM, BUT THE SECOND WOULD CAUSE THE "DESTRUCTION" OF
PAKISTAN. CONCERNING HIS RESIGNATION, HE HAD OFFERED IT
TO HIS PARLIAMENTARY PARTY BUT THE MEMBERS HAD REFUSED.

HOWEVER, HE IS ANSWERABLE TO THE PEOPLE AND TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE CURRENT CONFRONTATION HE WAS RECOMMENDING A "TEMPORARY" CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW HIM TO GO TO THE PEOPLE IN A REFERENDUM.

2. BHUTTO OPENED SPEECH BY REVIEWING HISTORY OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND POST-CAMPAIGN AGITATION, NOTING HE HAD OFFERED EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO THE OPPOSITION TO RECTIFY ANY INJUSTICES. HOWEVER, THE OPPOSITION CHOSE TO "WHIP UP HATRED" AND BRING PEOPLE INTO THE STREETS. THE GOVERNMENT TRIED TO MEET ALL THE OPPOSITION CONCERNS, INCLUDING THEIR DEMAND FOR A MORE ISLAMIC STATE, BUT ALL THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS WERE REJECTED. PM NOTED THAT MANY FELLOW MUSLIM STATES HAD OFFERED TO HELP NEGOTIATE BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES AND HE SINGLED OUT KING KHALID FOR SPECIAL PRAISE. HE ALSO MENTIONED HELPFUL OVERTURES FROM THE UAE, LIBYA, KUWAIT AND THE PLO.

3. PM ADDED THAT HE HAD MET PNA LEADER MUFTI MAHMOOD TWO DAYS AGO AND EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS WILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE OPPOSITION. HE TOLD MUFTI, HOWEVER, HE COULD NOT FIRST ACCEDE TO THEIR DEMANDS AND THEN NEGOTIATE. HE THEN READ TO THE ASSEMBLY MUFTI MAHMOOD'S REPLY WHICH HE SAID HE RECEIVED NIGHT OF MAY 12. MUFTI WROTE THAT "THE PNA LEADERSHIP IS UNANIMOUS THAT NO PURPOSE CAN BE SERVED BY CONTINUING SUCH FRUITLESS MEETINGS." LETTER THEN QUOTED PURPORTED PAKISTAN WIRE SERVICE REPORT, WHICH MUFTI SAID WAS SUPPRESSED, THAT CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSION HAS SAID THAT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WERE SO IRREGULAR NEW NO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ELECTIONS SHOULD BE HELD. MUFTI ALSO TOOK EXCEPTION TO THEK PM'S INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY CHARGE AND CLOSED BY SAYING THAT THE PNA WOULD BE UNABLE TO ENGAGE IN ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH BHUTTO UNTIL THEIR THREE BASIC DEMANDS WERE MET.

4. PM NOTED THAT "TERRIBLE POLARIZATION" HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE COUNTRY AND HE WANTED TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE DILEMMA. HE THEN WENT THROUGH THE THREE PNA DEMANDS, IMPLYING THE DEMAND FOR A NEW ELECTION COMMISSION COULD BE EASILY MET. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT NOW AGREE TO DISSOLVE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND HOLD NEW ELECTIONS. ALTHOUGH HE LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF THIS HAPPENING AT A LATER DATE, HE SAID TO DO SO NOW WOULD SET AN UNACCEPTABLE PRECEDENT AND WOULD LEAD TO DESTRUCTION OF THE COUNTRY.

5. FOCUSING ON THE PNA DEMAND FOR HIS RESIGNATION, BHUTTO SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT THAT THEY PASS A "TEMPORARY" AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION ALLOWING

A NATIONAL REFERENDUM. HE CALLED IT A "PERSONAL REFERENDUM" AND ONE THAT WILL SHOW HE IS ANSWERABLE TO THE PEOPLE. IF THE PEOPLE DECIDE THEY WANT HIM OUT OF OFFICE, HE WILL CALMLY ACCEPT THEIR VERDICT. HOWEVER, IF THEY WANT HIM TO REMAIN IN OFFICE, THIS WILL PROVE THE OPPOSITION CONTENTION THAT THE PEOPLE SUPPORT THEM IS FALSE. THE PM DID NOT GIVE ANY INDICATION WHEN HE WILL INTRODUCE THE AMENDMENT OR WHEN THE REFERENDUM MAY BE HELD.

6. PM MADE TWO PASSING REFERENCES TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND DID NOT MENTION US BY NAME. WHILE SPEAKING OF THE NATION'S POLITICAL CRISIS AND LISTING THE PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY, HE NOTED THAT "THERE HAS BEEN FOREIGN INTERVENTION" BUT DID NOT ELABORATE. LATER IN SPEECH HE AGAIN - WHILE CHRONICLING PAKISTAN'S PROBLEMS- SAID IN PASSING THAT "FOREIGN INTERVENTION HAS BEEN IMMENSE."

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7. WE WILL SEND ASSESSMENT OF SPEECH SEPTTEL MORNING MAY 14. AMSTUTZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Subject: PRIME MINISTER CALLS FOR NATIONAL REFERENDUM
TAGS: PINT, PK, (BHUTTO, ALI)
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